

**U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management
Glenwood Springs Field Office
50629 Highway 6 & 24
PO Box 1009
Glenwood Springs, CO 81602**

CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION

NUMBER: CO-140-2006-133- CE

CASEFILE/PROJECT NUMBER (optional):

PROJECT NAME: USGS Blue Lake Sediment Core Sampling

LEGAL DESCRIPTION: (See attached maps)

T. 3S, R. 84 W, section 35: SENE

APPLICANT: Bob Thompson, USGS

DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED ACTION:

The proposed action involves sediment coring. It would involve a single trip visit of one to two days. The proponent would float a raft out into the middle of the lake and use hand-powered tools to obtain a core that would be about 2.75 inches in diameter.

The coring project is attempting to reconstruct drought and other aspects of past climatic changes in the upper Colorado River Basin. Research involves studying fossil pollen and plant macrofossils (generally from lake sediments) to reconstruct past vegetation changes.

PLAN CONFORMANCE REVIEW: The Proposed Action is subject to and has been reviewed for and is in conformance with (43 CFR 1610.5, BLM 1617.3) the following plan:

Name of Plan: Glenwood Springs Resource Management Plan.

Date Approved: January, 1984; revised in 1988; amended in November 1991 - Oil and Gas Leasing and Development - Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement; amended Nov. 1996 - Colorado Standards and Guidelines; amended in August 1997 - Castle Peak Travel Management Plan; amended in March 1999 - Oil and Gas Leasing & Development Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement; amended in November 1999 - Red Hill Plan Amendment; and amended in September 2002 – Fire Management Plan for Wildland Fire Management and Prescriptive Vegetation Treatment Guidance.

Decision Number/Page: Consistent with current direction.

Decision Language:

CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION REVIEW: The proposed action qualifies as a categorical exclusion in 516 DM 6, Appendix 5.4; Letter: H, Number 6: A single trip in a one month period for data collection or observation sites.

| Exclusion | YES | NO |
|--|-------|--------|
| 1. Have significant adverse effects on public health and safety. | _____ | _____✓ |
| 2. Have adverse effects on such natural resources and unique geographic characteristics as historic or cultural resources; park, recreation, or refuge lands; wilderness areas; wild or scenic rivers; national natural landmarks; sole or principal drinking water aquifers; prime farmlands; wetlands, floodplains; national monuments; migratory birds; and other ecologically significant or critical areas. | _____ | _____✓ |
| 3. Have highly controversial environmental effects or involve unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of available resources. | _____ | _____✓ |
| 4. Have highly uncertain and potentially significant environmental effects or involve unique or unknown environmental risks. | _____ | _____✓ |
| 5. Establish a precedent for future action or represent a decision in principle about future actions with potentially significant environmental effects. | _____ | _____✓ |
| 6. Be directly related to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant environmental effects. | _____ | _____✓ |
| 7. Have adverse effects on properties listed, or eligible for listing, in the National Register of Historic Places. | _____ | _____✓ |
| 8. Have adverse effects on species listed, or proposed to be listed, on the List of Endangered or Threatened Species, or have adverse effects on designated Critical Habitat for these species. | _____ | _____✓ |
| 9. Have the potential to violate a Federal law, or a State, local or tribal law or requirement imposed for the protection of the environment. | _____ | _____✓ |
| 10. Have the potential for a disproportionately high and adverse effect on low income or minority populations. | _____ | _____✓ |
| 11. Restrict access to and ceremonial use of Indian sacred sites by Indian religious practitioners or adversely affect the physical integrity of such sacred sites. | _____ | _____✓ |
| 12. Significantly contribute to the introduction, continued existence, or spread of noxious weeds or non-native invasive species known to occur in the area or actions that may promote the introduction, growth, or expansion of the range of such species. | _____ | _____✓ |

INTERDISCIPLINARY REVIEW:

| <u>Name</u> | <u>Title</u> | <u>Area of Responsibility</u> |
|-----------------|----------------------------|---|
| Mark Wimmer | Range Specialist | Soil/Water/Air |
| Cheryl Harrison | Archaeologist | Cultural Resources and Native American Concerns |
| Kay Hopkins | Outdoor Recreation Planner | ACEC, WSA, VRM, WSR |
| Mike Kinser | Rangeland Mgmt. Spec. | Wetlands, Riparian Zones, Range Management |
| Tom Fresques | Wildlife Biologist | Wildlife, Fisheries, T&E Wildlife |
| Carla Scheck | Ecologist | Noxious Weeds, T&E Plants, Vegetation |

REMARKS:

Cultural Resources/Native American Concerns: A copy of the Education/Discovery Stipulation will be forwarded to the proponent.

NAME OF PREPARER: Mark Wimmer

DATE: 8/28/2006

DECISION AND RATIONALE: I have reviewed this CER and have decided to implement the proposed action.

This action is listed in the Department Manual as an action that may be categorically excluded. I have evaluated the action relative to the 10 criteria listed above and have determined that it does not represent an exception and is, therefore, categorically excluded from further environmental analysis.

SIGNATURE OF AUTHORIZED OFFICIAL:


Acting Associate Field Manager

DATE SIGNED: Aug 28, 2006



Education/Discovery Stipulation

All persons in the area who are associated with this project must be informed that if anyone is found disturbing historic, archaeological, or scientific resources, including collecting artifacts, the person or persons will be subject to prosecution.

Pursuant to 43CFR10.4(g), the BLM authorized officer must be notified, by telephone, with written confirmation, immediately upon the discovery of human remains, funerary items, sacred objects, or objects of cultural patrimony. Further, pursuant to 43CFR10.4 (c) and (d), activities must stop in the vicinity of the discovery and the discovery must be protected for 30 days or until notified to proceed by the authorized officer.

If in connection with operations under this contract the project proponent, his contractors, subcontractors, or the employees of any of them, discovers, encounters or becomes aware of any objects or sites of cultural or paleontological value or scientific interest such as historic or prehistoric ruins, graves or grave markers, fossils, or artifacts, the proponent shall immediately suspend all operations in the vicinity of the cultural or paleontological resource and shall notify the BLM authorized officer of the findings (16 U.S.C. 470h-3, 36CFR800.112). Operations may resume at the discovery site upon receipt of written instructions and authorization by the authorized officer. Approval to proceed will be based upon evaluation of the resource. Evaluation shall be by a qualified professional selected by the authorized officer from a federal agency insofar as practicable. When not practicable, the holder shall bear the cost of the services of a non-federal professional.

Within five working days the authorized officer will inform the holder as to:

- whether the materials appear eligible for the National Register of Historic Places;
- the mitigation measures the holder will likely have to undertake before the site can be used (assuming in situ preservation is not necessary); and,
- a time frame for the authorized officer to complete an expedited review under 36CFR800.11, or any agreements in lieu thereof, to confirm through the State Historic Preservation Officer that the findings of the authorized officer are correct and the mitigation is appropriate.

The proponent may relocate activities to avoid the expense of mitigation and/or the delays associated with this process, as long as the new area has been appropriately cleared of resources and the exposed materials are recorded and stabilized. Otherwise, the proponent will be responsible for mitigation costs. The authorized officer will provide technical and procedural guidelines for the conduct of mitigation. Upon verification from the authorized officer that the required mitigation has been completed, the proponent will then be allowed to resume construction.

Antiquities, historic ruins, prehistoric ruins, paleontological or objects of scientific interest that are outside of the authorization boundaries but directly associated with the impacted resource will also be included in this evaluation and/or mitigation.

Antiquities, historic ruins, prehistoric ruins, paleontological or objects of scientific interest, identified or unidentified, that are outside of the authorization and not associated with the

resource within the authorization will also be protected. Impacts that occur to such resources, that are related to the authorizations activities, will be mitigated at the proponent's cost including the cost of consultation with Native American groups.